

When I accepted the invitation of the Democratic Club to speak at a dinner being given by their membership to honor Mayor Lee P. Carlin, I realized that my appearance at what would be construed to be a Political Rally would give rise to some speculation on the part of those who know that in my 28 years in New Jersey, the nature of my work has prevented my taking an active part in partisan politics. "Has he gone into politics?" already has been asked; "He's a Republican speaking at a Democratic dinner - is he changing horses?" is bound to be asked; "He must be looking for something" is an inevitable conclusion to be reached by the more cynical minded citizens.

Were I inclined to take seriously such questions, and feel called upon to give answer, the most simple and factual way of answering would be to say "Well, No - and Yes." Because, depending upon how you weigh words, either answer is completely honest. (story).

No- I'm not getting into partisan politics any more than I ever have been. But, Yes - I am in politics and I shall always be in politics to the least degree that I feel every citizen should be in; by being interested in issues and in the candidates as they react to these issues; by seeing to it regularly that my vote is one that is counted in every election, with my view registered on every issue and every candidate; and that it is as important to praise a public servant as it is to criticize when either is justified.

No - I am not changing, nor attempting to underscore, my particular party identification. It just happens in our civic affairs, that in order to express a choice in primary elections, one must be identified with one of the principle parties - and this I have done and shall continue to do. But Yes - whether I vote as a Democrat or as a Republican, I shall always vote as my conscience and my understanding dictate, with respect to the issues and the merits of the various candidates who are competing for office. Besides, our municipal affairs are conducted on a non-partisan basis.

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No - I am not looking for anything for myself or my family. But Yes - I am looking for something - for any chance to make known the things that are important to me and mine, my city, my state, my nation, my race group which needs so very, very much that thus far has been denied.

These No's and Yes's were important when I became 21 (too many years ago to recount). They were important when I entered the Human Relations field as my life work. They have been important in all the things I have done in the many Boards, Committees and Commissions I have served for more than a quarter of a century in New Jersey. They were very important when in 1952, with many other citizens having similar motivations, I was privileged to enter the Citizens' movement for a change of city government and revision of our city Charter. It was so important that I found myself on the opposite side of the fence from many personal friends who in various capacities had been identified with the old, cumbersome, inefficient Commission form of government with which Newark was burdened. Friends or no, to me the change was the terribly important thing.

These No's and Yes's were my motivation when, as a member of the Screening Committee of the Citizens group, set up to select a slate of officers we would support in the first election under the provisions of the new Charter, I cast my vote for Leo Carlin to be our candidate for the first Mayor in the new regime;... and the same No's and Yes's operated when I was asked to be there this evening, knowing full well that many constructions would be put upon my presence here.

Man, as a result of the hazards inherent in his evolutionary development, is basically a questioning, doubting, suspecting animal - - - he continually seeks hidden motives; too frequently he is impelled to charge others with unworthy motives; particularly is this true in politics. Politics, the science of government - - or the Art of government, if you prefer. Politics, man's natural way of getting things done, or of preventing things from being done, with or against other men. Whether in the

capitol, city hall, the lodge, the church or synagogue or the club, politics are always present. The only shameful things about politics are:

1. the fact that so few people will engage in them regularly, consistently, earnestly; and
2. by this neglect and abdication of responsibility, the art and science of government frequently falls into unworthy hands.

When, therefore, a city can see the business of its government affairs being conducted in a fashion that is honest, conscientious, reasonably efficient, reasonably economical, we can thank our stars - and even take time out to pay tribute to the executive that has made these things possible.

I therefore am happy and proud to be here to pay tribute to a man who entered into the office of Mayor, with a pledge to those whose efforts gave the City of Newark a new lease on life, and a man who has lived up to that pledge as faithfully as one may who finds himself constantly beleaguered by all factions of self-seeking men, by special interest groups of all descriptions, and by the many spokesmen representing business, labor, professional, religious, ethnic and racial desires and points of view. That one is able to keep his own counsel, keep his name from being besmirched, retain the good will of many whose wishes he cannot and may not grant, continue in his service to the common good without favoritism - - such a person is in truth a good and faithful public servant. These things I believe I see in the service rendered by your guest of honor tonight - Mayor Leo P. Carlin.

I would find it impossible to leave this reunion tonight without leaving a thought, perhaps a challenge, or in any event, an interpretation which I think this occasion demands. Gathered here tonight is a cross-section of the leadership of our community - those elected, those designated by popular choice, those filling natural riches where leadership is surely needed. Each, in greater or lesser degree, is making some modest contribution that our city government may better

serve the common good. To all of you I would talk very earnestly for the next few moments on a subject that weighs heavily on my mind and upon the minds of many. In making these observation, I wish to express my thanks to the committee who invited me, for the great confidence implied in their refraining to tell me what I should or should not say - - .

There is great ferment in the world and in this nation of ours today. A great part of this ferment is forcing us to engage in a painful re-evaluation of our racial beliefs, traditions, policies and practices. In our own community and in our state, this ferment is being observed most notably in the field of Education. Like a contagion, there is spreading from city to city the expressions of impatience and dissatisfaction with the conditions under which the children of Negro parents are being prepared for the roles they must play in later years. Several years ago, two parents in Englewood, N. J. expressed their dissatisfaction through complaints to the state's Division against Discrimination, but the treatment accorded these complaints has left little other than festering sores to which our attention now is being drawn.

In the same sense that it is said that "History is but the prologue to the future" it also can be said that in this present ferment, we live with that which history has bequeathed - today and tomorrow and tomorrow. We shall be living with the sins of omission and the sins of commission of the past, for many a day in the future. Pray God that we shall be sufficiently honest, courageous and clear-sighted now that we can begin to reduce the debt, rather than add to its great weight.

It happens that in our western culture, three great institutions stand as monuments to man's highest aspirations. First, there is the Church, representing his yearning for spiritual growth, for emotional security, for a channel of communication with the Deity; standing as the living witness of the Brotherhood of Man under the common Fatherhood of God. Secondly, there is the Financial Institution standing as a symbol of material stability and security, of responsibility

and providence; existing as a reminder of man's dependence upon man, where integrity is the watchword. Thirdly, the Educational Institution stands as a symbol of every man's concern with the future of his children, that they may be assured full partnership in a better, safer, more honest and more honorable life than was his own lot.

Our expectations are very high, where these three great institutions in our culture are concerned. We are assured that they cannot, they must not, disclose feet of clay; they dare not shatter our dreams of a better life to which each is committed. Yet, man's selfishness, his blindness, his thoughtlessness, his prejudices intervene - and dreams are shattered. And the Killers of these dreams go blissfully on their way, assured that each in his own way is building stronger, higher, better.

The Church, for instance and in the main, is still fearful of controversy and of controversial matters which may involve the conditions of life hampering millions of our citizens in their social, economic, cultural and spiritual growth. Eleven o'clock Sunday morning is still the most segregated hour in the nation - in the North as well as in the South. Pastors, and their lay leadership, are still able to convince themselves that their's is a good religion, a sound religion, which closes its eyes to the grinding poverty, the spiritual hunger, the cultural emptiness of the exploited minorities in our midst. The Brotherhood of Man as enunciated by the Man from Galilee, was right for Palestine two thousand years ago but it is unrealistic, impractical, impossible in today's world.

The financial World is still motivated by "business first" policies, these in turn being defined carefully by old fears, superstitions, taboos - as surely as if we were trading coconuts in the deepest rain forests of the tropics, or wampum on the shores of Ojibwee Ganges. Housing problems which exist in every one of America's communities, are the hideous reminders that these superstitions and taboos prevail. Those who control the purse strings and the spending habits of the nation, remain deaf to cries of protest, impervious to the pleas of minority group leadership in their

quest for better job opportunity and better housing.

Education, preoccupied with its efforts to train in a social vacuum, the minds of young America, is still unmindful of the great responsibility it bears in embracing in this training experience, a fuller knowledge of the world, its people and their interdependence, and our total citizenship responsibilities. Education which would isolate us from vast segments of our fellow-citizens with whom we must work out our common destiny, is a sterile form of intellectual exercise.

There are those of us in this family of America's children who patiently, cheerfully, hopefully have awaited the day when we too "may sit at the table"

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After nearly 350 years of proving our need for educational opportunity - and our great capacity to absorb education, we still find ourselves expected to benefit more in self-development, while being provided with less in facilities and services than any other element in the American community. In the oldest sections of central city, which is the oldest and most deteriorated sections of our metropolitan areas, are found the seediest schools - - or the most crowded schools - the shortest hours of study - the greatest pupil to teacher ratios - - the highest number of substitute teachers - - and faculties rarely exposed to specialized human relations training for the understanding and knowledge the grave situation demands of them. Out of such combinations of deprivation it is expected that our children can acquire higher ^{motivation} information achieve higher performance to meet the certain competition which will confront them later in life.

The single, simple answer lying behind this contradictory situation may be found in the one word "containment". Keep them there together," "Don't let them contaminate us," "give them schools better designed for their intellectual levels." Yet, in these same area schools are found the handicapped sons of handicapped fathers, living in handicapped social environments - - all being the products of a vicious chain of racial exclusion and exploitation, starting with the

southern , rural, sharecropper shack, and ending in the northern, urban slum in a so-called "rented Room". In these area schools are to be found the children of hardworking, ambitious persons who, placing their dignity on convenient shelves, labor hard in fulfillment of their dreams of a better day for their children, who under better circumstances could be better than average students. In these area schools are to be found the sons and daughters of mechanics, white collar workers, business people and professional men and women who share in common with their ghetto neighbors little more than skin-color and desperation of need, but who also want desperately the give their children that which culturally they are capable of giving: the atmosphere, the facilities, the guidance, the challenge to which every American child is entitled.

These are the people who are at the core of the turbulence in our several New Jersey towns and cities. But the socio-economic distinctions presented above are lost upon the larger community whose spokesmen are sitting in judgment. "They're all alike" or "They really are happier by themselves" or "They cannot be expected to attain the scholarship standards of our children" They say. By such cliches are the real facts of protest being obscured, even to the point that very able, very honest and conscientious public servants echo the cliches without understanding the harm they do. "We must preserve the sanctity of the neighborhood school" they say, even though a particular so-called neighborhood school exhibits its "neighborliness" in no other manner than the racial sameness of its population. "Educators are not responsible for the pattern of housing segregation" they say; even though by the very defensive tactics they employ, educators give a hand to the tightening of the noose which financial and real estate interests have drawn around the racial ghetto.

Perhaps the greatest irony in this kind of situation, is that the motives of public officials are made crystal clear just by the words they use to justify their holding to the position out of which they derive greatest comfort. In exactly the same sense that well-trained law-enforcement officials can identify a criminal by the methods he is known to employ in his law-breaking activities, ^{so can the} intent and purpose

of a public official be seen in clear outline, by the cliché's he employs to support untenable arguments. Thirty-two years of dealing with employers, labor union leaders, school principals and superintendents, elected officials in all these areas of dissatisfaction and protest, have given me an intimate knowledge of the semantics of evasion, the lexicon of hypocrisy, the language of insincerity. I have no monopoly in possession of this knowledge. Perhaps the greatest test of the self-discipline which a leadership role in minority group living imposes, is one's ability to hear the endless repetition of familiar, meaningless, dissembling phrases, and still remain a gentleman.

As we find ourselves wrestling with the increasing complexity of problems confronting the Negro minority in the American community, north as well as south, it is incumbent upon us more and more to remember that remaining the gentleman is an important part of waging a successful war against deprivation and injustice. When the problem of Housing shall have been solved (note, I do not say IF), it will be as much due to our demeanor and attitude in carrying the fight, as to the vigor and organized strength and consistent performances with which we pursue our course. When the evil problem of employment discrimination will have been solved (note, I do not say IF) it will be due as much to the seriousness and quiet dignity with which we prepare our case, as it will be to the amount of indignation and dedication with which we strike back at those who discriminate against us. Anger is the natural result of one's encounters with meanness, injustice, unfair dealings. Anger - unrefined, primitive reaction - is rarely a good, efficient weapon with which to wage a fight. Anger is an undisciplined emotion which the good fighter will not carry into the ring or onto the battlefield. Anger is never enough equipment with which to cope with a problem.

Righteous indignation which is subject to discipline, which permits definition of purpose, which impells the development of plan and strategy, is a refinement of anger, and its use is the mark of the civilized man and an dangerous adversary. Thus, in contemplating the many problems that confront us, I plead for leadership and a

following mass that have achieved a level of emotional maturity that we can harness ^{our anger} ~~or anger~~, however, much it may be justified, and direct it in channels of productivity.

We today in Newark and in Essex county, represent a tremendous force, politically, economically, culturally. Within our great numbers, however, are many whose early lives have been marked with denial of even the basic, primitive services to which civilized people are entitled. Tens of thousands of us have been given a shamefully limited degree of exposure to educational direction; we have had little opportunity to develop skills or acquire cultural advantages with which to inspire our children. Through no fault of our own, we have been kept in a kind of economic and cultural bondage which in today's highly competitive world, leaves us at a terrible disadvantage. The more of the good things of life which have been kept from us, the more we resent the society that has caused this deprivation. We, who are in this category, are the truly angry people, and there is little justifiable criticism that can be levelled at us, because we are the victims of the environment that has fashioned us, and until we were able to move into the relatively free climate of Newark and Essex, there was little we were permitted to do to better our situation.

We are the people who need leadership as no other people in the Western hemisphere. We are put down in the middle of a vast, impersonal, northern Metropolitan area and forced to sink or swim, survive or perish. If we are indifferent to political issues, it is because we have never been permitted until now to identify with these problems and ^{know} what to do or how to do it. If we are crude in our social expressions, it is because there has been no system of social values conveyed to us, until now, to cause us to concern ourselves about refinement. If we are unskilled and lacking in thrift and industry, it is because there theretofore has been little incentive, or opportunity, to inspire us to higher things. Middle class society and middle ^{class} ~~class~~ standards do not even exist

in our vocabulary - except they may refer to the hincy folk who think they are better than us.

My friends, there are such people in our midst. They are here in great numbers. Little is being done with or for them. You and I look upon them and their antics with shame; but you and I have done little, if anything, to give them a broader perspective, higher goals. This is the great challenge confronting us in every major community in the country, the task crying for attention - but few of us willing to give attention. The Newarks of the nation, the central cities of great metropolitan areas, are being handed over to these people lock, stock and barrel. The rest of us are escaping to the suburbs, but demanding that central city continue to provide for our convenience the comforts and services to which we have been accustomed. Already we have seen in numerous instances throughout the country, how the undisciplined anger of these mistreated masses have led to political, social and economic problems of great depth. It is not enough to justify the anger; it is essential that through our leadership efforts, we have been able to induce a great potential force for good, to be directed in that channel, with purpose, with dignity, with proper discipline - and with gentlemanliness.

*Drinner Testimonial to
Hon. Leo Cawson, outgoing
Mayor of Newark
Essex House, Newark*